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...it all began in 1991...

# Eye on Hitler's Inner Sanctum

Proximity to power can be all too seductive. Walter Frentz was known primarily for movies he'd made about kayaking before he did much of the camerawork for Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*, a monumental propaganda film commissioned by Adolf Hitler about the 1934 Nazi Party Congress. He also was an eye behind the camera on *Olympia*, Riefenstahl's meditation on muscle and movement at the 1936 Olympics. On Riefenstahl's recommendation, Frentz later became Hitler's personal cameraman. He filmed military sites to show Hitler conditions in the field and took footage of the *Führer* that was used in newsreels. Meanwhile he snapped thousands of candid still photographs of Hitler and the Nazi inner circle that were meant for private rather than public consumption. Nazi insiders were willing to pay handsomely for pictures of themselves with the *Führer* and Frentz was happy to oblige.

Like Riefenstahl, Frentz never officially joined the Nazi party and later maintained he did not participate in their crimes against humanity. Even though Riefenstahl was the only woman in Hitler's inner circle besides Eva Braun, she maintained she had no knowledge of the campaign of racial purification that was being carried out in his name. But two new biographies—Stephen Bach's *Leni* (Alfred A. Knopf) and Jurgen Trimborn's *Leni Riefenstahl* (Faber and Faber)—contain convincing evidence that she witnessed a massacre of Jews in Konskie, Poland, in 1940 and that she used concentration camp Gypsies as slave labor in her 1944 film *Tiefland*. Similarly, even though Frentz could come and go as he pleased in the Reich Chancellery and Hitler's headquarters, he claimed he had nothing to do with the Nazis' dirty business. But he accompanied the SS leader Heinrich

Himmler in August 1941 to Minsk, where he witnessed a mass shooting of Jews. Six days later, on his 34th birthday, Frentz was given the honor of sitting next to Hitler at one of his private gatherings.

Until her death in 2003, at age 101, Riefenstahl insisted that she was first and foremost an artist and kept herself above the political fray. In an essay entitled "Fascinating Fascism," the late critic Susan Sontag gave lie to that claim. "*Triumph of the Will* represents an already achieved and radical transformation of reality: history become theater," Sontag wrote. "How the 1934 Party convention was staged was partly determined by the decision to produce *Triumph of the Will*—the historic event serving as the set of a film which was then to assume the character of an authentic documentary." Until his death in 2004, at age 94, Frentz claimed he was an apolitical observer among the Nazis who was only doing his job. Ironically, the most revealing work he did was not the idealized Nazi film imagery he made with Riefenstahl, but his informal snapshots. "The Private Hitler," beginning on page 30, features a selection of those images, many of which Frentz's son Hanns-Peter made public for the first time in the new book *Das Auge des Dritten Reiches*, or *The Eye of the Third Reich* from Deutscher Kunstverlag. Frentz's photos offer a rare view of Hitler and his cronies when their guard was down and serve as a reminder that the wellspring of evil is all too human.



COURTESY HANNS-PETER FRENTZ

**Walter Frentz films a scene in 1936 for the documentary *Olympia* under Leni Riefenstahl's direction.**

# The Private Hitler

**Walter Frentz's intimate pictures of the *Führer* and his friends offer chilling glimpses of mass murderers at work and play** By David McCune

**Past midnight.** Oversize rustic furniture. Grand masters on the walls. An anxious glance to see if the boss noticed the stifled yawn. Teacups and crystal glasses on small tables. This was the grand room at the Berghof, Adolf Hitler's home in the Bavarian Alps, and the *Führer* was holding forth for his invited guests.

At first, members of the Nazi elite found the invitations to these regular evenings an honor. Now they were bored to the point of pain. These were not conversations. The guests were extras on the stage of Hitler's monologues.

Some of the guests had been ordered to attend. Others, like Martin Bormann, Hitler's private secretary, did the ordering and were happy to be there. And then there was the tall, young man whispering in the corner to Eva Braun, showing her how to adjust a Leica camera. She smiled, whirled around, and snapped a picture of Hitler, who simply glanced her way and carried on with his monologue about architecture.

Eva Braun, whose very existence was one of the most closely guarded secrets of the Third Reich, handed the Leica back to her teacher, Walter Frentz,

and sat down on the sofa next to Hitler. Frentz was an outsider, yet he moved among the guests with comfort and confidence. Hitler seemed to approve. Perhaps because Frentz amused Braun. Perhaps because Frentz was a fellow artist.

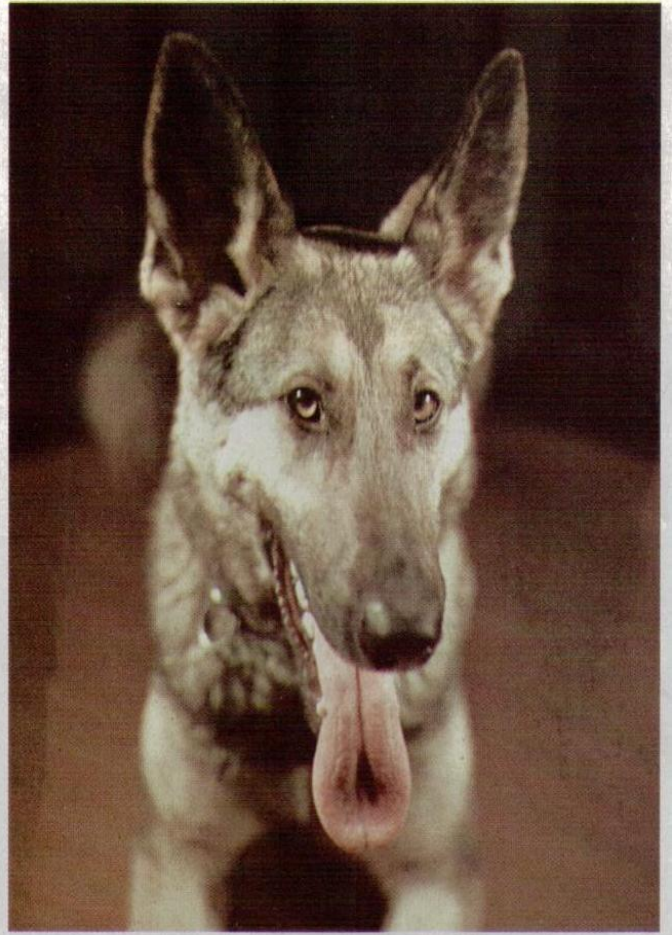
Whatever the reason, Frentz enjoyed largely unfettered photographic access to the *Führer* and his inner circle. He was not Hitler's official still photographer. That job went to Heinrich Hoffmann, who took carefully crafted propaganda pictures that depicted Hitler as larger than life. Hoffmann's pictures were often staged and always showed Hitler in control. Frentz was primarily a cinematographer who shot Nazi newsreels. He was also a ubiquitous presence at gatherings of the Nazi elite and

always had a still camera at hand to take spontaneous snapshots: Nazi propaganda minister Josef Goebbels laughing at one of Hitler's jokes; SS commander Heinrich Himmler smoking a cigar with his cronies; Eva Braun watching as Hitler, looking like a relaxed dad, plays with a child.

Frentz lived at Hitler's headquarters. The Nazi



Adolf Hitler's private photographer, Walter Frentz, and director and propagandist Leni Riefenstahl study a scene for her movie of the 1936 Berlin Olympics, *Olympia*.



bigwigs trusted him. His address book was a “Who’s Who” of the Third Reich, many of whom were happy to pay Frentz for photographic souvenirs of their time at the center of power. “The important thing is that they thought his snapshots would not be published,” says Frentz’s son Hanns-Peter, who publicly presented a wide-ranging selection of the photographer’s work for the first time in the new German book, *Das Auge des Dritten Reiches* (*The Eye of the Third Reich*). When he died in 2004, Walter Frentz left behind more than 20,000 war-era photographs, which provide an intimate, behind-the-scenes perspective on a diabolical regime. The candid and chilling pictures put a human face on mass murder.

Frentz began his film and photographic career as a propagandist, though not for the Nazis. His passion was white-water kayaking, and he proselytized endlessly as a young man. A pioneer of what would later be called extreme sports, he was the first to kayak down some of Europe’s wildest rivers and gorges. His pictures were shot

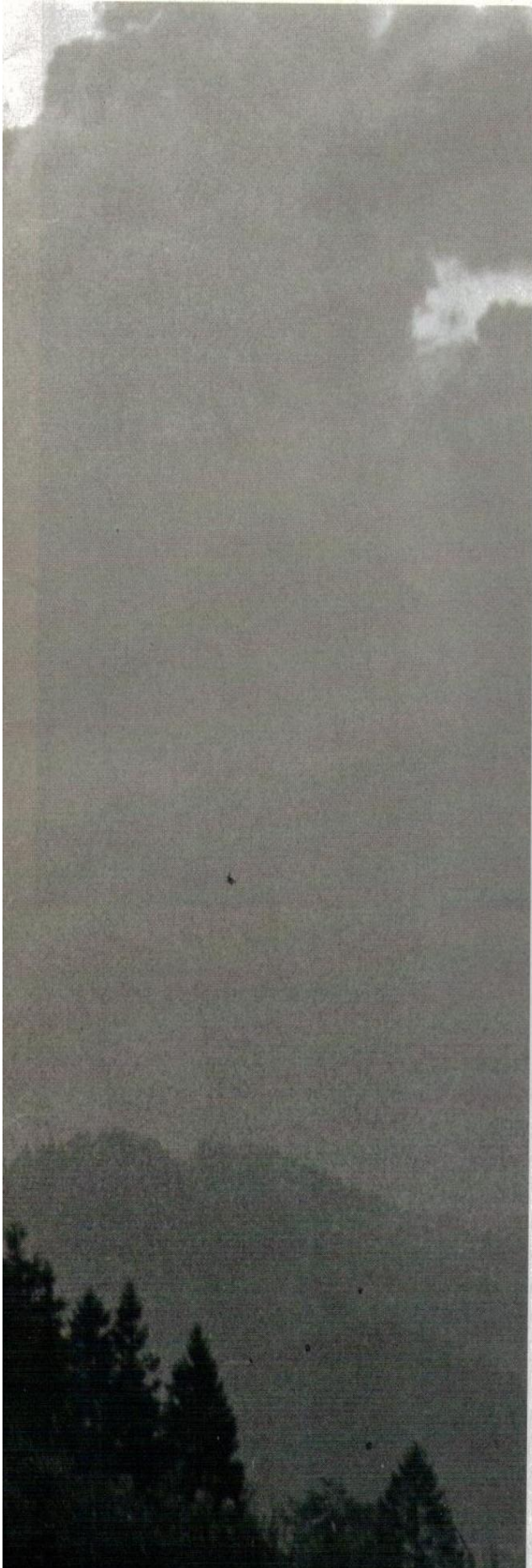
from a few inches above the water, often below the crest of the next wave. Frentz lyricized “the joy of battle up there in the mountains or on a storm swept sea alone in a kayak.” He claimed to find there the “manly virtues of comradeship, tenacity, focus and decisiveness.” One of his kayaking comrades was a budding architect, Albert Speer.

In 1933 Frentz’s first three kayaking films premiered. Adolf Hitler became chancellor of Germany. It was a good year for Frentz, then 25. His kayaking buddy Speer recommended him to a rising young actress-turned-director, Leni Riefenstahl.

Frentz and Riefenstahl collaborated on her first large Nazi propaganda film, *Victory of Faith*, and then on perhaps the greatest work of cinematic propaganda ever, *Triumph of the Will*. Frentz used a hand-held camera to create a sense of closeness and immediacy, just as he had in his kayak films. “His greatest triumph,” gushed one reviewer about Frentz’s shots of Hitler riding through Nuremberg. “[It is] as if cameraman Frentz had the electricity of life in

**Eva Braun, above left, relaxes on the terrace of Hitler’s mountain retreat, the Berghof. Hitler hid his relationship with her from the public. They married on April 29, 1945, the day before their suicide.**

**Hitler’s dog Blondi, above right, eyes the camera with an unfathomable expression. She died the day Hitler did, having been used to test the effectiveness of a cyanide capsule.**



his camera instead of celluloid." Frentz himself called his work on this Nazi glorification his "most wonderful assignment and greatest experience."

Frentz had a special talent for bringing the viewer into the action. He often filmed from behind his subjects, for example, showing Hitler standing at attention, his right arm out in salute, looking into the eyes of the adoring masses. In these pictures the viewer sees the world from Hitler's perspective. It is easy to feel Hitler's excitement, to be seduced by the adulation. In *Olympia*, Riefenstahl's film of the 1936 Berlin Olympics, Frentz constructed a harness, so that marathon runners could carry a camera while training. He wanted the viewers to shake and sway with the runners. And he shot from the decks of competing sailboats: "It is more interesting for the viewers if they can join in the sailing."

Frentz never joined the Nazi party, but he seems to have known where the money was. By the time he turned 30, he had worked on several Nazi films and traded in his car for a sporty Hanomag Sturm Cabriolet with a 50-hp engine. He had taken his first picture of Hitler. He was ready for the Nazis to go to war.

Frentz was a young man at the periphery of power. This was heady stuff, but it only got better. Riefenstahl recommended Frentz to Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop for an assignment to Hitler's headquarters. Frentz claimed he was one of three candidates and that an aide to Hitler picked him because at 6 feet 4 inches he cut an impressive figure.

Perhaps that memory was a product of Frentz's vanity. He certainly cared about appearances. He was careful to point out that he was in the *Luftwaffe*, not the army. The uniforms were better looking. In fact, his position as a member of the *Luftwaffe* on special assignment to Hitler's headquarters gave him enormous freedom. Since he was not part of the army's so-called "Propaganda Company," he could roam headquarters more freely. "I could do whatever I wanted," he said. "I may have been in the *Luftwaffe*, but due to my special assignment status no one told me what to do at headquarters."

While his films were clearly intended as propaganda, his still photographs were not meant for public consumption.



Heinrich Himmler indulges in a cigar and a laugh with Martin Borman and others on the Berghof terrace in spring, 1943.



Goebbels, Himmler, Göring, Braun and even Hitler himself were relaxed in his presence. A joke, a shared laugh, a cigar on the terrace at the Berghof, at play with Blondi the dog or with staffers' children: These are the unguarded moments Frentz captured.

Frentz knew who he was dealing with. In 1941 he traveled to Minsk with Himmler. On the morning of August 15, he watched the mass execution of at least 80 men and women. Frentz claimed years later that he went with Himmler out of curiosity. "We never got out," he complained. "We never got to the front." Two days after the murders, he kayaked 35 kilometers, a trip he included after the war in his list of paddling accomplishments. Six days later he celebrated his 34th birthday and proudly noted in his diary that he had the place of honor to the right of the *Führer*.

Frentz never explained his relationship to Hitler. "He trusted me" was all he would allow. Frentz saw himself as an artist, as did Hitler. During the *Führer's* many visits to architects' studios to inspect plans for future German cities, Hitler chose not to take his official photographer. He took Frentz, with whom he could talk about aesthetics and architecture.

Hitler often sent Frentz on inspection tours. "I was his eye," said Frentz. He would photograph the Atlantic defenses or

an occupied city and present his findings in slide shows back at headquarters.

Frentz was a witness to power, to mass murder, to the laughter of criminals. Yet he was never very critical of what he saw. His son argued with him about this in the postwar years, often and strenuously. "His opinion was that he just documented what others did," Hanns-Peter Frentz says now. But it wasn't that simple. "I don't blame my father...for being a soldier and cameraman during the Nazi period," he adds. "Most people would have happily and proudly jumped at that chance." Still, the son expected more from his father. "At the very latest by the end of the war with its 50 million dead, 6 million murdered Jews and other murdered opponents of the Nazis, and with the extensive destruction of Europe, I wish that an educated man like my father would have looked back in horror at his own role in these terrible events."

Walter Frentz preferred to remember the excitement and glory of it all. As recently as 2000, he received a picture from Leni Riefenstahl of the two of them shooting film for *Olympia*. Frentz is down at ground level, concentrating, looking up, next to Riefenstahl. Imagine the crowds around them, the yelling, the dawn of the Third Reich. In the margin she scribbled, "Dear Walter—those were the days—wonderful." □

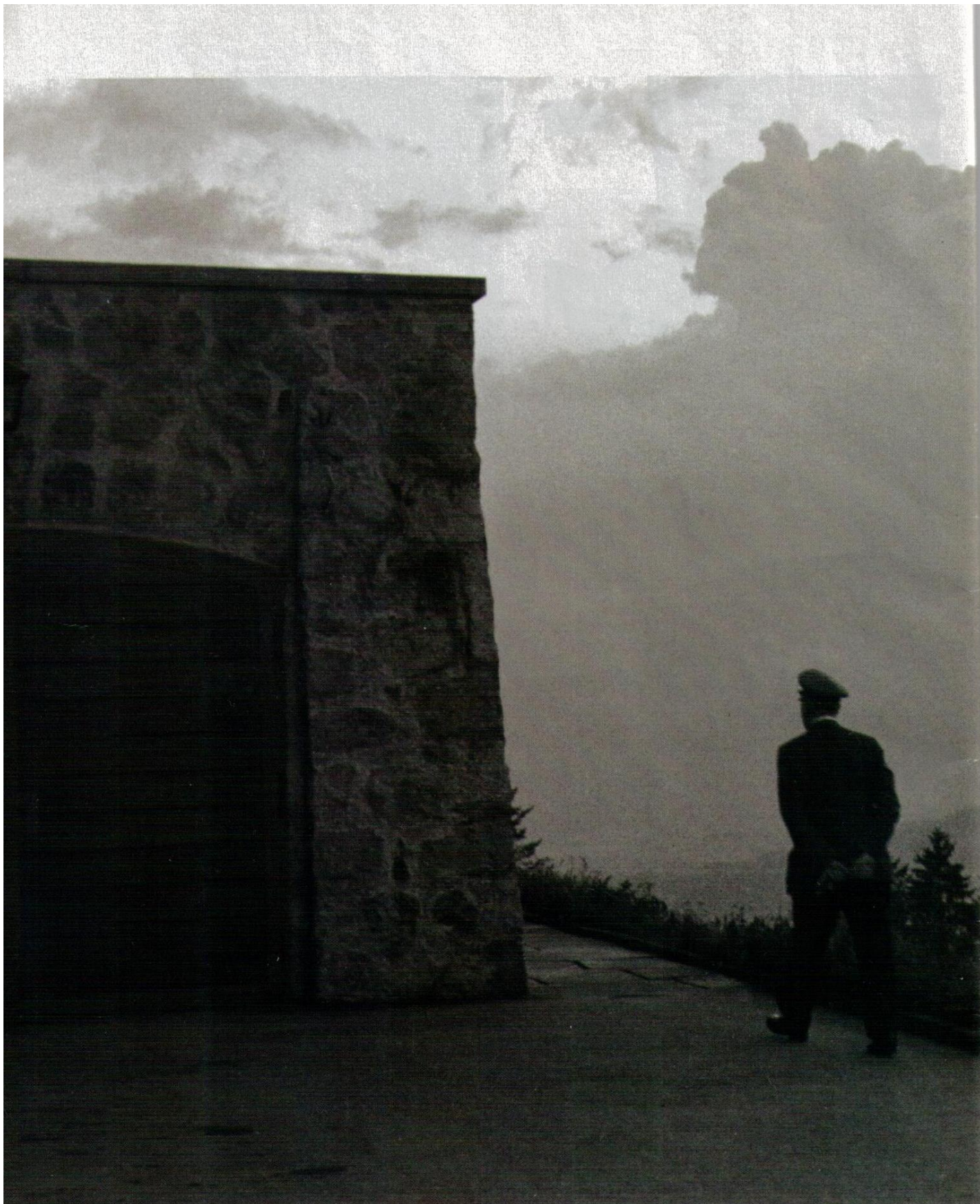
**Joseph Goebbels joins Hitler on a walk. 'No one can talk with him for any length of time without feeling strengthened and reinvigorated', the Nazi propaganda chief noted in his diary the next day.**



**A melancholy Hitler stares out of an airplane window. Frentz had extraordinary access to Hitler and could take candid shots clearly not meant for the Nazi propaganda machine.**



**Hitler and Eva Braun visit the daughter of a friend. Perhaps longing for the trappings of normal family life, Braun asked Frenzt to photograph the moment without Hitler's knowledge.**



**Hitler strolls outside the Berghof a few days before the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941. Frenz liked the clouds and mountains that surrounded the retreat.**



Appearing resigned, Hitler stands outside the Berghof in April 1944. His right fist is clenched, perhaps due to advancing Parkinson's diseases, which propagandists generally took pains to hide.

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...an item from Queensland, Australia...why won't they let him rest?...

## Electrical Trades Union compares Newman Government to Nazi regime in controversial advertisement

By: Anthony Gough, [The Courier-Mail](#), June 08, 2013 12:39PM



File picture. Nazi Germany leader Adolf Hitler has featured in a new ad from the Electrical Trades Union attacking the Newman Government. **Source: News Limited**

**A UNION ad comparing the Newman Government to the Nazi regime and featuring an image of Adolf Hitler has been labelled "deplorable" by the Jewish community.**

The full-page ad, which was placed in today's *Courier-Mail* by the Electrical Trades Union, features a large image of Hitler in full Nazi regalia, and states the former German leader would be "proud" of the LNP's new industrial relations laws.

It features an anti-union quote from Hitler from 1933, when the Nazi leader said "We must close union offices, confiscate their money and put their leaders in prison." **Queensland Jewish Board of Deputies president Jason Steinberg said the advertisement was "deplorable and inappropriate". "Any analogy of the Nazi genocide in Australian public debate is totally inappropriate," he said. "It trivialises the Nazi regime (and) it diminishes how evil Hitler was in killing six million Jews and Gypsies and Australian forces who fought against them."**

Mr Steinberg said there were still Holocaust survivors living in Brisbane and Queensland, and it was "totally" disrespectful to them and they would be "appalled" to see the comparison made.

He said while political leaders in Australia were fair game, the advertisement went "way too far".

*The Courier-Mail* has also fielded calls from members of the public complaining about the advertisement, which also features a quote by Martin Luther King praising civil disobedience.

One caller said the civil rights activist would be "rolling around in his grave" if he knew his words were placed next to an image of the Nazi leader.

Another caller from Cleveland said the advertisement was offensive and in "very poor taste", while another said she was "horrified" to see the image of Hitler in the advertisement.

The advertisement was placed by the ETU in response to controversial new laws passed by the Newman Government this week, which force union bosses to disclose their pay and perks.

Unions have slammed the laws as "extreme", saying they will shut down democratic debate and freedom of expression while protecting industrial organisations and business interests.

The advertisement states Queensland unions have a "proud history" of standing up against destructive governments and fighting for justice for all workers, and calls on workers to stand against the new laws.

The ETU has been contacted for comment.

<http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/queensland/electrical-trades-union-compares-newman-government-to-nazi-regime-in-controversial-advertisement/story-fnihsrf2-1226660516092>

# DO YOU CARE ABOUT DEMOCRACY IN QUEENSLAND?

## SAVE YOUR SAY

Queensland Unions have a proud history of standing up against destructive Governments, whether it is fighting for a fair go for all workers through Enterprise Bargaining, Health and Safety laws and more apprenticeships or resisting the selling of our assets.

For more than a century Unions have been fighting for your rights and are a cornerstone of your democracy

To the people who are not in Unions but understand what we do, it's time for you to also stand up and be counted because, without doubt democracy in Queensland is at risk.

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On the 2nd May 1933 Nazi leader Adolf Hitler said;  
*"We must close union offices, confiscate their money  
and put their leaders in prison."*

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On the 5 June 2013, the Newman LNP Government passed extreme IR laws Hitler would have been proud of. The ETU believes these extreme laws, found in no other democracy, aim to:

- Silence dissent by imposing draconian restraints on a Union's ability  
"...to influence a person's opinion about a political matter"
- Stifle public debate and media campaigns on matters such as:
  - safety at work
  - rights at work
  - opposing assets sales
  - opposing 457 Visas
  - opposing hospital and school closures
  - opposing reduced police numbers
- Jail trade unionists for periods of up to 5 years and fine them up to \$340,000.00.

This is about the LNP cutting off at the knees any campaign that offers an alternative view to its policies.

Yet the legislation leaves the LNP Government and corporate leaders free to do as they please!

## YOU MUST NOT BE SILENCED UNIONS MUST NOT BE SILENCED

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Social Justice Campaigner Martin Luther King famously said  
*"One has a moral responsibility to disobey  
unjust laws."*

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Find out more and join the campaign:  
[www.saveyoursay.org.au](http://www.saveyoursay.org.au)

Authorised by Peter Simpson, Secretary



An advertisement by the ETU condemning the Newman Government has been condemned as inappropriate.

**NOTE how the comments in the below article 'prove' there were no gassings!**

1. The 25 kilometers of yellowing papers include typed lists of Jews, homosexuals and other persecuted groups, files on children born in the Nazi Lebensborn program to breed a master race, and registers of

arrivals and departures from concentration camps.

2. The Nazis' meticulous record-keeping stopped only when Jews and other victims were herded into gas chambers.

3. "At death camps like Sobibor or Auschwitz, only natural

causes of death are recorded - heart failure or pneumonia," said spokeswoman, Kathrin Flor. "There's no mention of gassing. The last evidence of many lives is the transport to the camp."

## German Holocaust archive reaches out

**International Tracing Service (ITS) in Bad Arolsen contains 30 million documents on survivors of Nazi camps, Gestapo prisons, forced laborers and displaced persons. Yet many people are not even aware it exists**

**Reuters, 13 May 2013**

George Jaunzemis was three and a half years old when, in the chaotic weeks at the end of World War II, he was separated from his mother as she fled with him from Germany to Belgium.

He grew up in New Zealand with no memory of his early years, unaware the Latvian woman who had emigrated with him was not his real mother.

Then in 2010, a letter from the International Tracing Service (ITS) in Bad Arolsen changed his life. He discovered his real name was Peter Thomas and that he had a nephew and cousins in Germany.

"I was astonished, thrilled. After all this time, I was an uncle," Jaunzemis, 71, told Reuters. "You don't know what it's like to have no family or childhood knowledge. Suddenly all the pieces fitted, now I can find my peace as a person."

Yet it took Jaunzemis over three decades of tenacious searching to find the vast archive in this remote corner of Germany where his past was buried.

Bad Arolsen contains 30 million documents on survivors of Nazi camps, Gestapo prisons, forced laborers and displaced persons. It rivals [Israel's](#) Yad Vashem Holocaust center and the Washington Holocaust Memorial Museum in historical value.

However, many people are not even aware it exists. It was only opened to researchers in 2007 after criticism that it was being too protective of its material. Despite sitting on a mountain of original evidence, it is still struggling to get the attention academics say it deserves.

Last year just 2,097 people visited Bad Arolsen compared with the 900,000 who went to Yad Vashem. Rebecca Boehling, a 57-year old historian who arrived from the United States in January, wants to change that.

"We have a new agenda," said Boehling, who came from the Dresher Center for the Humanities at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

"We're sitting on a treasure trove of documents. We want people to know what we have. Our material can

change our perspective on big topics related to the war and the Holocaust."



**New director wants archive to become major research center Photo: Reuters**

Boehling is the first archive director who is not affiliated with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which had managed Bad Arolsen since 1955 with a narrow remit to trace people.

The ICRC handed over the reins to an international commission of 11 countries in January, a step that could help unleash the full potential of the archive for academic study.

Boehling plans to hold international conferences, get foreign students to use the ITS, publish more research and host national teachers' workshops, although she doubts the 14 million euro budget from the German government will stretch that far.

Personal stories about victims, which the ITS can provide in abundance, are a powerful tool in educating young generations, she said. Currently, events hosted by the archive are attended only by townspeople and groups of pupils from nearby.

### **Schindler's List**

Located next to a site where Hitler's SS officers once had barracks, Bad Arolsen was chosen for the archive after the war because of its central location between Germany's four occupation zones.

But now its location is a disadvantage. There are no big cities nearby and connections to Berlin and Frankfurt are slow. The town itself, on the northern edge of the state of Hesse, has a population of just 16,000.

The archive is housed in an inconspicuous white building containing clues to the fates of 17.5 million people.

The 25 kilometers of yellowing papers include typed lists of Jews, homosexuals and other persecuted groups, files on children born in the Nazi Lebensborn program to breed a master race, and registers of arrivals and departures from concentration camps.

It even has a carbon copy of Schindler's List, the 1,000 Jewish workers saved by German industrialist Oskar Schindler.

The Nazis' meticulous record-keeping stopped only when Jews and other victims were herded into gas chambers.

"At death camps like Sobibor or Auschwitz, only natural causes of death are recorded - heart failure or pneumonia," said spokeswoman, Kathrin Flor. "There's no mention of gassing. The last evidence of many lives is the transport to the camp."

The ITS, which employs 295 people, still receives 12,000 enquiries a month and reunites up to 50 families a year, even though the number of Holocaust survivors is dwindling. This tracing work will continue.

Most enquiries come from Russia and Eastern Europe and Boehling welcomes the new phenomenon of grandchildren and great grandchildren, who have more emotional distance from the war, wanting to find out the fates of their relatives.

One major ongoing task is the digitalization of records which will make it easier for outsiders to carry out keyword searches which had previously been impossible as everything was done in-house with a filing system based on name cards.

Despite its remote location Boehling says the archive won't be moved. It has become a something of a memorial for Holocaust survivors, like former Auschwitz inmate Thomas Buergenthal who visited the center in 2012 after getting new information on where his father had perished.

Buergenthal, who escaped Nazi shooting squads, Auschwitz gas chambers and a death march before he was 12, was found by his mother in a Polish orphanage in 1947 through the Red Cross.

"This is my hallowed ground," Buergenthal, 78, told Reuters from his US home, referring to the archive.

"My mother died without knowing my father died at Buchenwald. I'm mad about that. It is extremely important to me," said Buergenthal, who became an expert in human rights law and a judge at the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

"These documents are more important for the future than for the past. They will be the common heritage of mankind of what really happened during that period. (They are) what we need to prevent it happening elsewhere in the world."

<http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4364029,00.html>

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## Hans FLEER

### Obituary

#### FLEER Johannes (Hans):

**AM DCM Honorary Colonel 2nd Commando Regiment After a short illness, Hans Fleer passed away on Friday 5th April. He will be missed by all those who loved and respected him. To paraphrase another great man - the late Spike Milligan "We told him he was sick".**



Published in *The West Australian* on April 11, 2013

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## Family finally learns the deeds of an Ice Man

By: Cameron Stewart, [The Australian](#), April 25, 2013 12:00AM

**HOW Hans Fleer was not awarded the Victoria Cross still puzzles his mates. They talk in whispers about the day when the 20-year-old corporal, with his patrol pinned down by 600 Viet Cong near Nui Dat, earned his nickname "The Ice Man".**

When Viet Cong machine guns unexpectedly raked his patrol on a hot afternoon in February 1970, nine of

Fleer's mates fell, including the commander and the signaller.

The young infantryman didn't blink but instead took control. The Ice Man directed the remaining Diggers to cover him while he ran into machine-gun fire on what looked like a suicide mission to rescue his injured mates.

As his unit citation says: "With complete disregard for his own safety, Hans Fleer moved out under covering

fire from his section to initiate the recovery of wounded men."

To this day, no one knows how the hail of bullets missed Fleer, who - after bringing the wounded Diggers

to safety - then directed the safe withdrawal of his winged platoon.



**Hans Fleer, left, took control of his army comrades near Nui Dat in 1970 when their commander was killed, and ran into machine-gun fire to rescue wounded Diggers. Source: Supplied**

For his courage, Fleer was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal, second only to the Victoria Cross.

But when he returned to Australia, Fleer, a modest man, rarely spoke about that day again, even to his family and even though he would go on to join the SAS for a further 20 years.

This month, when Fleer died suddenly, aged 63, his children knew little more than that their beloved dad had been a good soldier. What happened next took their breath away.

"The surprise came in the days after his death," his daughter, Melanie, said yesterday.

"We were contacted by so many army guys who were floored by Dad's passing: I think everyone considered him invincible."

At his funeral last week, they came from all over Australia - soldiers young and old - to pay their final respects in Melbourne to a man who fellow soldier Rick O'Haire said was "an icon of the SAS".

"There must have been 200 soldiers and former soldiers at his funeral - there were people from his old patrol, from the SAS, commandos and even generals - it was incredible," said Fleer's son, Michael.

Even the head of the Australian Defence Force, General David Hurley, has paid homage to Fleer.

"I served with Hans in 1RAR in the mid-70s," General Hurley said yesterday. "He was measured and unflappable by nature, a very professional soldier and officer, and a tremendous role model for junior officers."

Martin Hamilton-Smith, a former SAS colleague of Fleer and now a Liberal opposition frontbencher in South Australia, was at his funeral last week. "Hans grew

from a brave young soldier into a father figure in Australian Special Forces," Mr Hamilton-Smith said.

"He helped take young soldiers from the jungles of Vietnam, through counter-terrorism, on to the deserts of Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Hans brought together the soldierly qualities of moral courage, mental toughness, a dry wit and a sense of mateship. Everyone he touched was better for having walked beside him."

At their dad's service and at his wake, Michael and Melanie learned more about his wartime exploits than during his lifetime.

"They also called him Major Fear," Melanie said.

"He was a Clint Eastwood type with a steely stare and a dark sense of humour. He had a very stoic face which you couldn't read and he would just look into you."

At his funeral, Fleer's mates told his kids how he should have received the Victoria Cross rather than the DCM for his actions that day near Nui Dat.

"Some of the old guys reckoned that decision (not to give him a VC) was political bullshit," Michael said.

"They told me that if you had to pick a man to go to war with, it was my father."

"It has been almost surreal because he never really talked about the army and what he did."

"And now we are hearing from so many SAS guys saying he was instrumental in their career and lives."

O'Haire, who served with Fleer for 40 years, said simply: "Hans was the bloke you wanted by your side on a cold, dark, windy night. We will never see his likes again."

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/nationalaffairs/defence/family-finally-learns-the-deeds-of-aniceman/story-e6frq8yo-1226629028929>



a photoshop production

**... Adolf Hitler, first man on the moon...**



a photoshop production

**Penguins of Madagascar ... or is it Neuschwabenland?**